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Contributors, subscribers and readers will find important information on the sixteenth advertising page following the reading matter.

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At a meeting of the Council of the State Society on August 25, 1917, the resignation of Dr. Sol. Hyman, as editor of the Journal, was accepted. Dr. Alfred C. Reed was elected editor. Dr. J. Henry Barbat, president of the State Society, has reappointed Dr. Sol. Hyman a member of the Publication Committee.

THE CHALLENGING OBLIGATION.

Not to be blamed but pitied! Not to be despised but compassionated! Who can say whether ignorance or fear was his enemy?—or both, for they are so often joined. Perchance his deaf ear had not heard the ringing appeal for justice, liberty, international law and democracy. Perchance his blind eye had not observed the agonizing plight of Europe's helpless. And so, perchance, his sluggish brain had not conceived the idea that to his own door would stalk the fate of Europe, did he not rouse his ear, and eye and brain to look on facts as facts. For he was indifferent to the appeal, tried to avoid the direct issue, sought to evade the crisis.

He claimed to be a conscientious objector, as if that justified his conscienceless refusal to help the helpless, and to help make war an anachronism. Or he claimed his religion forbade him to fight. Strange his same religion should not forbid Europe's million children to suffer and die. Or he claimed his philosophy of life was too advanced and high to permit him to do this thing. Or he claimed he did not believe in war. Or he claimed

some technical trumpery which should win him exemption and did not see that he gained exemption from honor, and obligation, and self-respect, and the regard of his fellow men. He claimed,—all these and more, when ignorance and fear, twin sisters of disaster, dwelt in his soul, and he would translate their whisperings into a conscience. He claimed,—what did he not claim? And in the white crucible of national peril and national challenge, his philosophy of life failed ignominiously, could not stand the test of just war's acid. He failed in the crisis; and he is to be pitied,—not blamed, compassionated,—not despised.

Fortunately he is not to any extent in the profession of medicine. Fortunately the doctor has girt himself with his old-time principles and his historic character of seeking whom he might save. Let there be no slacker. We dare have no slacker in *this* profession. It must lead and hold up the torch. *Our* philosophy has not failed and will not fail in this, civilization's greatest crisis in history. The challenging obligation of service comes to-day to the medical profession with the authority of an insistent demand. One out of five of us must go to the army. The rest of us, if our loyal support is tendered, will allow no consideration of personal advantage or gain to hinder the one ideal now uppermost. This war must be won. To that end let every doctor do his bit, whether at home or at the front.

"The basis of this demand is not patriotism in general, or militarism in any degree, but the very justice of the national cause, the supreme

importance of the issues at stake. Truth needs now not apologists, but defenders. Humanity needs not lip confessors, but champions. Civilization needs not expounders, but exponents. Internationalism needs practical builders who know the precise lay of the national foundations. The peace-makers who shall be called the children of God are none other than the stern, unsentimental, stout-hearted fighting men who now strive with might and main to build a lasting international peace, who are the exponents of civilization where it is threatened, the champions of humanity, the defenders of truth."¹

THE MAINTENANCE OF INDEMNITY DEFENSE FUND.

The initial assessment for the organization of the Indemnity Defense Fund was fixed at \$30.00, one-half to be paid in cash upon subscription, and the balance by note due one year thereafter. In fairness to those who joined the Fund promptly, it was necessary to fix a limit upon this method of payment, and therefore December 31, 1917, was settled upon as the last maturity date for notes covering the deferred payment. In other words, a member joining the Fund at any time subsequent to January 1, 1917, paid \$15.00 in cash and the maturity date of the note given by him was December 31, 1917, no matter at what date he came in, and, of course, this rule obtains for all members joining at any time up to December 31, 1917.

Commencing January 1, 1918, the Council has decided that the full initial assessment of \$30.00 be paid in cash. This ruling is, of course, dictated by the interests of those who have been prompt in becoming Contributing Members.

Despite what has been said and written upon the subject we are still in receipt of many inquiries on the subject of assessments, and particularly as to whether or not these assessments will be levied regularly each year. This is not the intention, nor the design of the Fund. The amount of the assessments and the frequency with which they will be levied depends entirely upon the successful assertion of claims against the Contributing Members. Taking as a standard the experience of our Legal Department for the past eight years it may be conservatively said that these assessments should not in any event exceed \$10.00 per annum, and the greater the number of our members who join the Fund, the lower will be the amount of these assessments. We do not mean to give the idea that there will necessarily be an assessment of \$10.00 each year. It may not be necessary to levy any assessment, and we trust it will not, for at least two or three years. The idea we are seeking to convey is that assessments will only be levied as necessity for replenishing the Fund arises, and that the experience we have had shows that an assessment of \$10.00 per annum would be the maximum figure.

It must be borne in mind, however, that in considering propositions of this character the law of averages plays a large part. Therefore, it is

extremely desirable that as large a membership as possible be obtained for the Fund.

It is so patently to the interest of each member of the Society to join the Fund that it seems ridiculous to do so much talking about it. Members accused of malpractice always turn to the Society for protection, advice and comfort. Our records show that the organization has never failed them, but the ordinary legal defense does not protect against adverse final judgments. A member insured in a private company nevertheless looks to the Society first. If he were a Contributing Member he would secure the active co-operation and assistance of our Legal Department as well as that of his insurance company. If he be not insured; it is certainly to his interest to secure the protection afforded by the Fund.

There is nothing technical, involved, or complicated in the organization of the Indemnity Defense Fund. The Coverage Rules are a plain statement of the fundamental principles necessitated for the protection of the individual and the entire organization. The regulations governing the administration of the Fund are based upon fundamentals used by all trust companies, and the board of trustees handling the Fund is composed of men whose judgment in matters of finance is most sound and conservative.

Ask your County Secretary about the Fund, or write to the Secretary of the Society.

THE ALCOHOL QUESTION.

IV. ECONOMIC CONSIDERATION.

From the economic point of view, is the use of alcoholic beverages an asset or a debit? Does alcohol have any influence on the economic condition of the employer or of the employee? Two methods of approach are available in this consideration. In the first method, data have already been presented in this series¹ showing the physiological action of alcohol and its deleterious influence on public and private health. It is unnecessary here to repeat these statements, or others to the same intent. They are demonstrable and must be accepted. The action of alcohol thus described leads certainly to definite economic results. These results appear in a variety of forms. Among them may be noted increase of industrial accidents, interference with efficiency and productivity, increase of sickness, loss of wages, unemployment, contribution to the maintenance of the vicious circle of poverty, crime, vice and alcoholism. These are matters of very pertinent economic concern, and to ignore them does not remove them.

The second method of consideration is from the standpoint of productive business, concerned at its best with three things, return on invested capital, a living wage for labor, and efficient service to the clientele served. In a paper before the National Conference of Charities and Corrections in Indianapolis, Alexander Fleisher² discusses the attitude of large employers toward the use of

¹ Cal. State J. Med., 1917, XV, July, Aug., Sept. Edits.

² Mo. Bull. N. Y. C. Dep't of Health, 1916, VI, 159.

¹ Survey, Aug. 18, 1917.